

STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS



I-55 RIVER DES PERES COMMUNITIES TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT PLAN

WINTER 2004/ISSUE III

Hello and Welcome From the Study Team

As many of you know, last year Congressman Gephardt secured federal funds for MoDOT to evaluate access needs along Interstate 55 in the area near the River Des Peres. Over the past year our study team has been working on a transportation plan for this area that is now nearly complete. With the publication of this newsletter we are happy to present the study's findings and recommendations.

Our objective has been to develop a plan for transportation improvements that will help make your communities a better place to live, work, and do business.

Our approach has been straightforward. We have built upon previous studies to ensure a consistent planning process while looking creatively at new solutions. This process included engineering as well as the development of financing and implementation recommendations. The result is a plan that addresses the major transportation issues for the study communities.

Throughout the process we have listened to the community. We have held numerous meetings with key stakeholders and conducted two public meetings.

We recognize and acknowledge the support of the community and the stakeholders. We could not have successfully completed this project without *you!*

Debbie Allen
Public Information Specialist

Final Public Meeting

February 11th
Hancock Elementary
5:00 to 7:30 PM
6:00 Presentation



A View of the Historic National Lead Site

Courtesy of St. Louis County Economic Development Council

Study Recap

This study has been conducted in 4 major phases. In spring 2003 we began by identifying the transportation-related **problems, needs and opportunities** in the study area. We held over 20 meetings with affected agencies, local neighborhood groups, elected officials, and local business owners. We also asked the public for input at our first public meeting at the Bayless Intermediate School. The result was an understanding of your biggest transportation concerns: poor circulation in northern Lemay, confusing freeway access along I-55 near the River Des Peres, trucks in neighborhoods, safe

access to I-55, and the need for improved local transit service.

In late summer we **developed alternatives** to address these issues. We started by holding an Alternatives Development Public Workshop at the Hancock Elementary School, and subsequently held an additional 10 stakeholder meetings. Our efforts resulted in three key areas of focus:

- Improving Access to and Safety of I-55
- Improving Access to River Des Peres Industrial Areas
- Improving Access to Commercial and Residential Areas

We have since **evaluated the alternatives** based on several criteria including: economic impact; financial feasibility; environmental, cultural, and social impacts; traffic operations; and compatibility with local and regional planning efforts.

Our **recommendations** are presented, in summary, on Pages 2 & 3.



Recommendations for Improving Access to and Safety of I-55

One of the most pressing needs in the study area is for improved access to I-55. The Weber Road, Germania, and Carondelet interchanges have only partial access. We have developed two sets of alternatives to improve these conditions.

The first alternative: One-way Outer Roadways from Bayless to Loughborough (shown below) would provide a continuous outer roadway system al-

lowing for access to all cross streets without compromising freeway safety. This alternative would be built within MoDOT's existing right-of-way with minimal residential displacements. While this alternative has many benefits, two major factors raise possible concerns: funding and potential conflicts with other projects.

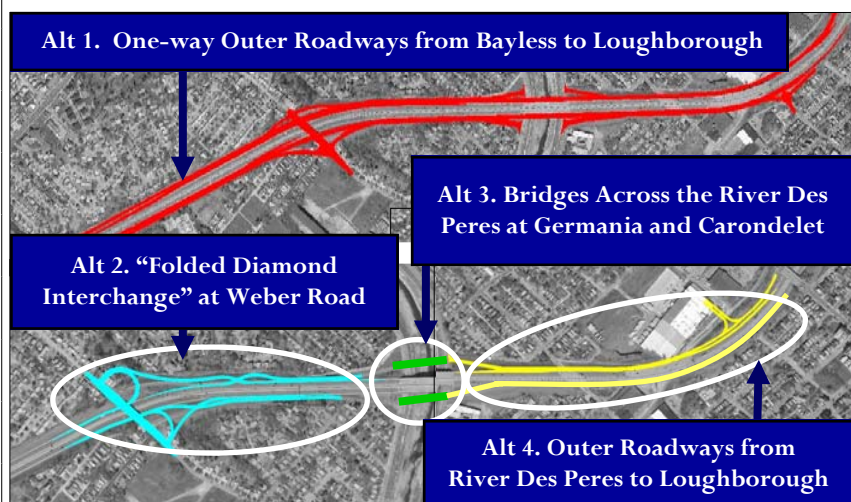
This alternative would require the entire outer roads to be built at once. Furthermore, the East-West Gateway Coordinating Council is currently conducting a study to find an alignment for a proposed MetroLink line into

To address these factors, we have developed three other alternatives for improve access to I-55. Alternative 2, A Folded Diamond Interchange at Weber Road in conjunction with Alternative 3, Bridges Across the River Des Peres at I-55 and Alternative 4, Outer Roadways from the River Des Peres to Loughborough (shown left) are designed such that each project could be built in stages. The ability to segment these projects means that a variety of funding sources may be used to make financing more feasible. Additionally, this set of alternatives has been designed so that they could coexist with the potential MetroLink alignments.

Costs for the two sets of alternatives are similar:

- One-way Outer Roadways from Bayless to Loughborough Alternative — \$58 Million
- Weber Road Folded Diamond Interchange— \$22 Million; Bridges across the River Des Peres at I-55 —\$3 Million; and Outer roadways from the River Des Peres to Loughborough—\$22 Million

In consideration of all of the anticipated impacts, the Folded Diamond Interchange at Weber Road Alternative, Bridges across the River Des Peres at I-55, and Outer Roadways from the River Des Peres to Loughborough are being recommended in the plan. However, this recommendation could change in the course of more refined engineering.



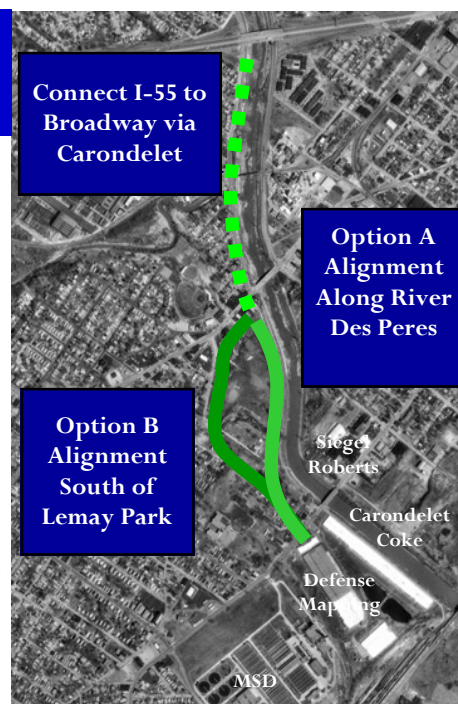
lowing for access to all cross streets without compromising freeway safety.

This alternative would be built within MoDOT's existing right-of-way with

South County, and this alternative could potentially interfere with one of the proposed MetroLink alignments.

Recommendations for Improving Access to River Des Peres Industrial Areas

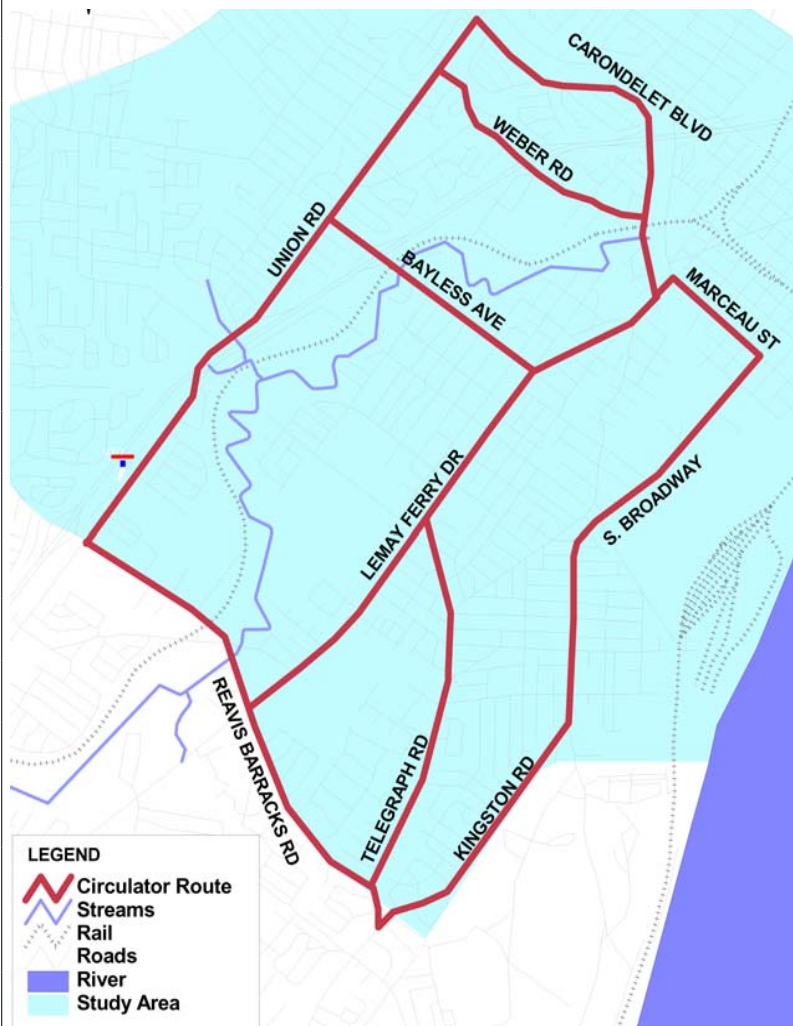
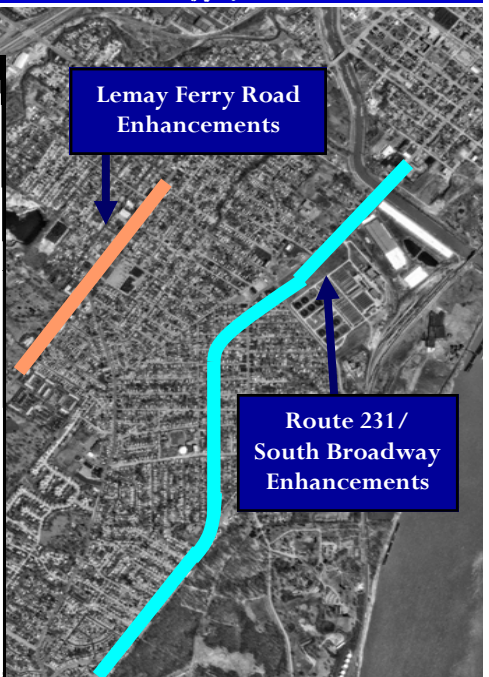
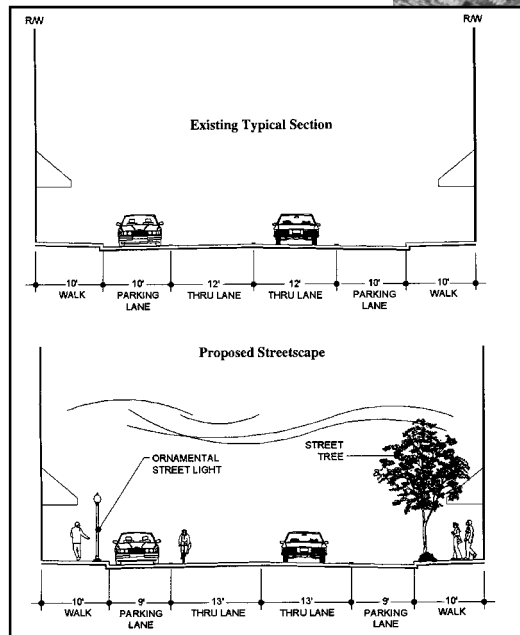
Extending Carondelet Boulevard/Weber Road to Broadway would best meet this need. Two alignment options are recommended: Option A, going north or Option B, going south of Lemay Park. In general, going north of the park (along the River Des Peres) could be completed at the lowest cost (about \$7 Million) and with the least impact to residential areas. However, this alignment also runs along lower ground and would be subject to flooding. Moreover, strict federal guidelines might apply because much of the land in the area was bought out by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) after the flood of 1993. Going south of the park is more difficult to design and build due to the ground's surface, its impact on residential areas, and its higher cost (about \$14 Million). However, this alignment would work with the River Des Peres Greenway Comprehensive Plan currently being prepared by the Metropolitan Sewer District and the US Army Corps of Engineers. The decision of which alignment option to pursue could be determined by environmental studies, which may be required by the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).



Recommendations for Improving Access to Commercial and Residential Areas

Enhancement Projects

It is important to provide better access not only to the redevelopment sites in the study area, but also to the existing residential areas and commercial corridors. To this end, the enhancement of the Lemay Ferry Road and South Broadway Corridors is recommended. Such enhancements could include streetscape improvements, roadway modifications, and signage. These projects would cost on the order of \$6 Million for each corridor.



Local Transit Circulator

During the course of discussions with the public it became apparent that the elimination of the Union Road / Morganford Metro transit route has become a problem for the community. A local circulator route, such as the Clayton Shuttle Bee, was identified as an alternative that would address this need while being mindful of the cost. The local circulator alternative would serve the commercial areas along Lemay Ferry Road as well as Broadway. This circulator would fill a gap in the local service, specifically serving businesses and residents of the area.

The cost of a transport vehicle will depend on size, but would probably be between \$45,000 and \$85,000. MoDOT would solicit bids for transit vehicles on behalf of a local sponsor who would be required to pay a 20% match for the vehicle. The local sponsor (a business district, religious coalition or other civic group) must be a local not-for-profit organization in the community. Operation and maintenance costs will depend on hours of operation, but would fall within the range of \$54,000 to \$80,000 annually. This cost would be paid by the local sponsor.



Missouri Department of Transportation
1590 Woodlake Drive
Chesterfield, Mo 63017

CURRENT RESIDENT OR BUSINESS

Where do we go from here?

Over the past year, MoDOT has been studying the transportation needs in the I-55/ River Des Peres Communities of Lemay, Affton and South St. Louis City. We are now presenting you with our final recommendations.

Although this plan enjoys the support of several agencies and elected officials, there is currently NO FUNDING for design, right of way acquisition, or construction for any projects.

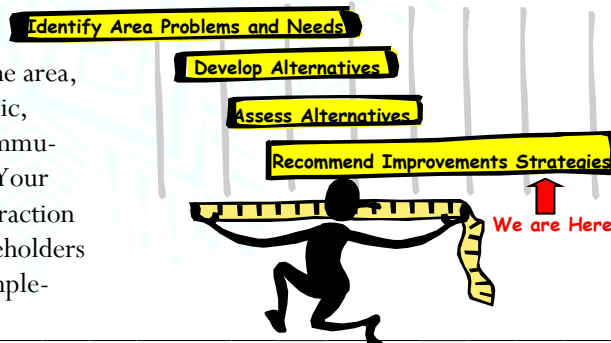
As such, projects will likely be phased over time with their scheduling being dependant on the availability of funding and future development in the area, as well as the cooperation of the public, elected officials, local businesses, community groups, and involved agencies. Your continued support, interest, and interaction with the partnered agencies and stakeholders will be important to the successful implementation of the plan.

In order to facilitate this process, we have made recommendations for not only the improvements that are required, but also for funding options and mechanisms that agencies could employ cooperatively.

If you have any questions or comments on the plan, please feel free to contact me.

Wesley Stephen,
Study Manager

Timeline



Get Involved

Visit our website

www.modot.state.mo.us/local/d6/hottopics/Projects-STL.html

Attend

Final Public Meeting
February 11th
Hancock Elementary
5:00 to 7:30 PM
Presentation at 6:00 PM

Call Us

1-888-ASK-MODOT

Email us

comments@mail.modot.state.mo.us

